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29 November 1956

MEMORANDUM FOR: Colonel White

SUBJECT : Discussion of Proposed CIA Club at Langley

At your Staff Meeting on Wednesday, 28 November 1956, a round-table discussion was held on the proposal for a CIA Club at Langley. The following personal comments were offered by the Office Heads present:

1. Mr. Houston, Office of General Counsel: Since the building housing a Club would be constructed with private funds on Government land and will become Government property, it will require no special legislation. Does not altogether agree with the proposed method of financing. Of course, we must poll all employees to find out the extent of interest in a Club. We must recognize that there are many insoluble problems in establishing concessions on Government property which could be easily handled as concessions in a self-supporting employee Club.

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2. Mr. [ ] Office of the Comptroller: In general, the principle of a Club has merit but questions the method of financing. It is difficult to evaluate to any degree of accuracy the demand for such a Club, since this will not be like an Officers Club on a post where people are living. Generally a Club is used in evenings and on weekends by people who reside near the Club. Doubted if participation would be sufficient to make it a success.

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3. Mr. [ ] Office of Security: Strongly in favor of a Club, primarily because of the security aspects. The lack of local shopping facilities will involve considerable loss of work hours for people who must go into town to a bank on pay day and for purchases of necessary items. Moreover, there is a security problem in all employees going to their respective banks on pay day which could be overcome by a banking facility located on the site. Various offices get together for social functions at restaurants, homes and other gathering places, which would be more adequate and secure if there were a club type facility within the new building area.

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4. Mr. [ ], Audit Staff: The Club idea is good but it is believed to be directed at the top level employee and the average medium to low level grade employees would not be active participants. The convenience of having concessions within our building area is the best feature. Believe we are too big and employees are too decentralized to support a Club as such.

5. Mr. Garrison, Office of Logistics: From a morale standpoint the proposal is good but has serious doubts on the method of financing or whether we could raise enough money to acquire the facilities indicated. It would be better if the initial capital investment could be from the Government, not the employees. Employee fees and dues would be used for furnishings and upkeep. Since employee residences are so scattered, there is a question as to whether they would join and use such a Club. Would prefer to see items such as a gymnasium, rifle range, etc., which could be used during the day, rather than as after-hours recreational facilities.

6. Mr. Baird, Office of Training: Very much in favor of having the concessions on the property but not a social Club because of the public relations aspect. Would also like a gymnasium, pistol range, bowling alleys, etc.

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7. Mr. [redacted], Office of Personnel: Agrees in all aspects of the proposal as submitted. Many employees do not join clubs because they do not know the members. Also, the facilities of social rooms would be excellent for the numerous private parties which are undertaken by groups of Agency personnel.

8. Dr. Tietjen, Medical Staff: In favor of the entire proposal, primarily because security imposes many limitations on our social environment and such a Club would go a long way toward providing the social activities from which many people feel they must now refrain.

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9. [redacted], Office of Communications: The Pentagon building is a good example of the necessity for concessions in a building isolated from a city, and if a Club is necessary to get the concessions, then he is in favor of the Club. However, the rotation of people overseas will make it difficult to handle initiation fees, dues and periodic assessments. Most Officers Clubs in the military establishments are a real headache, and this could develop to even a worse headache because of the large membership and decentralization of personnel in this area. Very much interested, however, in having a bowling alley in or near the building, since bowling is of such great interest to so many people in the Agency.

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10. Mr. [redacted], Management Staff: Suggest we contact the Office of the Secretary of Defense to discuss the problems they have had relative to competition to acquire the limited number of concessions. There will undoubtedly be differences of opinion between the Agency Offices on the socializing of the overt and covert offices personnel.

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11. Mr. [ ] Office of DD/I: Mr. Amory thinks the personnel of his Office are in favor of a Club but he is concerned over the necessity for high initiation fees.

12. Mr. Paul, Legislative Counsel: Feels there could be a serious public relations problem by the Agency having a private Club. In addition, to enjoy the facilities of the concessions and the Club, it would be necessary that the Club building be very close to the office building.

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13. Mr. [ ] Special Planning Assistant: The principle of the Club is very good but there are many problems which could prevent the Club from existing -- for example, will a financial institution loan money for a building constructed on Government property since they would probably have no foreclosure rights? We must recognize that there could be a race problem in the swimming pool and bar. He is opposed to the sliding scale of fees and dues. It is suggested that we should get experts on construction and operation of a club to look into this proposal and give recommendations. If it were on private property, rather than Government land, a Club could be more discriminate in its rules.

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14. Dr. [ ] Special Support Assistant to DD/S: Believes the financing will be the most difficult problem. Contrary to Mr. [ ] belief, feels that the bulk of the participation will be by the lower grade employees. Has great reservations as to whether the facilities (particularly golf and swimming) could be adequate to accommodate as many as [ ] employee members. Does not like the idea of the Club being built on Government property.

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15. Mr. Lloyd, Assistant Deputy Director (Support): The most serious problem to consider, even after all the other financing and administrative problems are solved, is the one of public relations. Even though this could be a self-supporting enterprise, there will be much criticism, though unfounded, which will accuse us of using our confidential funds for a Club.

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[ ]  
Special Assistant to the  
Deputy Director (Support)